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BOOK REVIEWS

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CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

OLUME 15 NUMBER 2

DITORIALS

ne Idolatry of America

The prophets warned Israel, lest it as-me that its favored position among the tions was due to its virtue rather than e grace of God. They warned the power-l nations round about Israel, lest they as-me that their power gave them immunity m the perils of God's judgment. Ameri-n destiny has combined the temptations which Israel was subject with those to ich Babylon was subject.

We are the most powerful nation on rth. We are also sufficiently virtuous to tempted to the assumption that our wer is the fruit of our virtue. We do t quite say as Babylon is accused of ying: "I sit as a Queen and I shall never ow sorrow." The fact is that we are not ite sure of ourselves and look into the ture with apprehension, tempted to per-t the hydrogen bomb out of fear that thing else will make us sufficiently secure. t we are very sure of ourselves morally.

The idolatrous devotion to the "Ameri-n way of life" grows at a tremendous ce. We hasten to add that the whole America is not quite as completely given it as some of our foreign critics imagine. t the business community has never been sure of its virtue—nor so afraid that the ghtest assertion of the power of the state the interest of human welfare is the first p down the slippery slope which leads totalitarianism. And the ethos of the siness community does influence sources of culture which ought to be more immune to the growing national idolatry.

Thus the annual report of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, in surveying the grants it has made for various educational enterprises, speaks of the "basic rules of the American system" which it declares remain unchanged but which must be reinterpreted in a day in which technology shrinks the world's distances and brings about "conflicts between our value system and those of other nations." The report also speaks of the necessity of a more adequate program of American studies in our colleges in order to "give our young people more understanding of and dedication to American values." There is nothing said here of a great and long tradition of democratic society in which America was nurtured; nor is there any mention of the necessity of correcting our unique conceptions of democracy by the experience of other free nations. This omission is the more striking since the few words which the Carnegie report has on the meaning of democracy makes it quite clear that it shares the general notion that democracy and liberty are to be equated. There is no suggestion, as there is little in any of these paeans of praise for the American way of life, that democracy can never mean merely freedom. It must always relate freedom to justice, to community, and to equality as the regulative principle of justice.

The Advertising Council of America has been carrying on a campaign intended to

clarify the meaning of the American way of life in which it is suggested that the "Miracle of America," namely our vast productive power, is due merely to the spirit of initiative in our "free enterprise system." There is no suspicion that some of our wealth is derived from the fabulous natural resources of our continent, which China, for instance, could not draw on even if that nation were technically as efficient as we are. Furthermore the Advertising Council gives no credit to the various pressures and counter pressures in our economy (unions and strikes, for instance) for achieving a tolerably just distribution of our wealth. It would have us believe that if we only produce more, every one is bound to share equally in the abundance. Thus one of the most serious problems in a capitalistic economy, the problem of under-consumption, is obscured.

The fact is that all of the perennial problems of a free economy are momentarily obscured by the fact that an impoverished world needs American goods. We are actually wealthy enough to provide some markets for these goods by Marshall plan grants. We imagine ourselves very generous in this policy, but when the Marshall grants run out and the impoverished world will be unable to buy what it needs from us, and we will even be unwilling to buy from the world a sufficient amount of imports to finance the exports, we will not only recognize that we have not been as generous as we imagined, but we will also discover that a free economy has not solved its problems as permanently as it supposed.

Inevitably the religious world is corrupted by this idolatrous creed of America. Many business men will no longer support the World Council of Churches or the Federal Council of Churches because the pronouncements of these bodies on economic affairs have preserved a proper critical reserve toward the American pretensions of a perfect economic system.

Recently a pastor of a large city church sent us a brochure from one of his pious laymen on the subject of Christianity and economic life. This Christian layman is afraid that we will create "confusion" by adding mere "human opinion" to the "laws of God." For him the laws of God consist of two propositions: (1) the love commandment, and (2) the proposition that men are endowed by their creator with the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The treatise is a work of art in explicating the meaning of "love" and of "freedom" without a word about justice. The author insists that the state has only a negative function according to "God's plan," namely, to "protect the right of every man." Any more positive action in the interest of justice is deprecated. The pious layman wants good Christians to be socially minded but he doesn't want them to be coerced to do justly, for "man's individual behaviour as a social being can not be forced on people." "Social qualities come from within," he declares, "and can therefore only be cultivated." One is reminded of the day when Herbert Hoover opposed unemployment insurance on the ground that it destroyed the good old American way of voluntary aid to the unfortunate.

Thus Christian sentimentality is made a cloak for a corrupt form of laissez faire politics. What is left out of account is that a healthy society forces practically all people to be just beyond their natural inclinations. It does not do this by pure coercion. It does it by establishing standards of justice which gain the moral assent of the majority of the population but yet operate against the immediate inclinations even of some of the good people who helped to establish the standard. Any Christian political thought which exploits the law of love without considering the power of the law of self-love is betrayed into sentimentality. As David Hume observed: Politics must assume the selfishness of men, however we may speculate on the degree of their unselfishness and however much we may seek to increase that degree above the level of our political arrangements.

Our present prosperity is actually creating a mood among our lay Christians which

proximates the uncritical Christian ador-
on of the "free enterprise system" before
rise of the social gospel challenged it.
ie social gospel was frequently itself too
ralistic, but one might be grateful now
some of its emphases, however inade-
ate.

If the ministers of our great urban
urches become again the simple priests
d chaplains of this American idolatry,
otly compounded with a few stray Chris-
n emphases, they will merely add one
re dismal proof in the pages of history
at a religiously sanctified self-idolatry is
re grievous than its secular variety.
is is how the Gospel becomes a salt that
s lost its savor.

The Gospel can not be preached with
th and power if it does not challenge
pretensions and pride, not only of indi-
uals, but of nations, cultures, civiliza-
ns, economic and political systems. The
od fortune of America and its power
ce it under the most grievous tempta-
ns to self-adulation. If there is no power
d grace in the Christian church "to bring
wn every high thing which exalteth
lf against the knowledge of God," the
urch becomes not merely useless but
ngerous.

We Protestants speak critical words
ut the idolatrous pretensions of the
man church. But some of these pre-
sions are actually more plausible than
s miserable identification of the "laws
God" with a particular form of democ-
y, exhibiting nuances and emphases
ch are possible only in America and
ch may not be possible here for any
gth of time.

e Hydrogen Bomb

Each age of mankind brings forth new
ils and new possibilities. Yet they are
ays related to what we have known
ore. The age of atomic bombs, sud-
ly developing into a thousand times
re lethal hydrogen bomb, is very dif-
ent from the age of scythe and plough-
re. It confronts us with the possibility of mutual mass annihilation. Yet we are no different than our fathers were. Our present situation is a heightened and more vivid explication of the human situation.

One basic similarity between ourselves and our fathers is that our power over the course of human history is limited. We had imagined that the very technics which finally produced atomic destruction would make us the masters of history. But they merely produce an increased amount of power over nature which has a dubious role in the affairs of men. When we confront the problem of bringing the destructive possibilities of this power under moral control the whole ambiguity of the human situation is more fully revealed.

Consider the facts. We had the knowledge to produce the more lethal bomb four years ago; but wisely did not exploit it. Then, when the news came that the Russians had the a-bomb, we were certain that they would be, as we were, on the way to achieving the more deadly h-bomb. There seemed, therefore, nothing to do but give orders to develop it. The fact that this was done without public debate represents a real threat to the democratic substance of our life. This merely accentuates the danger in which we have been ever since secret weapons have been developed. It is, at any rate, fairly certain that had the President submitted the matter to Congress, the decision would have been identical with the one he made. Thus we have come into the tragic position of developing a form of destruction which, if used by our enemies against us, would mean our physical annihilation; and, if used by us against our enemies, would mean our moral annihilation. What shall we do?

The pacifists have a simple answer. Let us simply renounce the use of such a weapon, together with our enemies if possible, but alone if necessary. This answer assumes that it is possible to summon the human will to defy historical development with a resounding "No." But where is this "human will" which could rise to such omnipotence? Unfortunately we do not

have moral access to the Russian will. We have to limit ourselves to the will of America and of the western world. Could we possibly, as a nation, risk annihilation or subjugation for the sake of saying "no" to this new development of destruction? Could we risk letting the Russians have the bomb while we are without it? The answer is that no responsible statesman will risk putting his nation in that position of defencelessness. Individuals may, but nations do not, thus risk their very existence. Would a gesture of defencelessness possibly soften the Russian heart? That is the other possibility implied in the pacifist solution. The answer is that we have no such assurance. Granted the Russian hope and belief that it has the possibility of bringing its peculiar redemption to the whole world, it is not likely to be impressed by any "moral" gesture from what it believes to be a decadent world. In other words, our will is neither powerful enough nor good enough to accomplish the miracle expected of us in the pacifist solution.

Yet we are never the prisoners of historical destiny, even though all pretensions of being its master have crumbled. What shall we do within the limits of our power? Perhaps, since the so-called Baruch plan has become obsolete through the loss of our monopoly in atomic destruction, the thing to do is to revise our proposals and make another effort to secure agreement with the Russians. This course of action is widely approved; and it probably ought to be tried. But it has little prospect of success. The Russians are almost certain to demand general disarmament as the price for any agreement in the field of atomic energy. That means that they believe it possible to dominate Europe politically if the military defenses against its encroachments are removed. We cannot pay that price because we cannot afford to deliver Europe over to communism.

Perhaps the most feasible possibility is that proposed by a group of eleven scientists who have suggested that we produce the h-bomb but make a solemn covenant never to use it first. This proposal has several merits. It would serve to allay some of the apprehensions which the world feels about our possible use of the bomb. It would also restrain those elements in our defense department which are placing undue reliance on the bomb and who may, if we are not careful, so develop our defenses that we could not win a war without using the bomb. It would also tend to counteract all those tendencies in our national life which make for the subordination of moral and political strategy to military strategy. We must not forget that though we must be prepared to defend ourselves in case of war, it is more important to overcome communism by moral, economic, and political measures. In that case we would not have to fight the war for which the strategists are preparing our defenses. For this reason the proposals of Senator MacMahon, looking toward a tremendous expansion of our aid to the western world, are of great significance.

The refusal to use the bomb first is not of itself a sufficient strategy. But such a refusal would tend to encourage all the more positive strategies for preserving both peace and civilization. Yet the refusal to use the bomb first does have a further significance. We would be saying by such a policy that even a nation can reach the point where it can purchase its life too dearly. If we had to use this kind of destruction in order to save our lives, would we find life worth living? Even nations can reach a point where the words of our Lord, "Fear not them which are able to kill the body but rather fear them that are able to destroy both soul and body in hell," becomes relevant.

The point of moral transcendence over historical destiny is not as high as moral perfectionists imagine. But there is such a point, though the cynics and realists do not recognize it. We must discern that point clearly. A nation does not have the power to say that it would rather be annihilated than to produce a certain weapon. For, as the scientists have asserted, the production of that weapon may serve to guarantee that it will never be used. But

use such a weapon first represents a quite fferent moral hazard. It ought not to be ipossible to nations to meet that hazard ccessfully.

ie British Elections

These lines are written before the British ections; they will be read after the results e known. The experience of all prophets our own presidential election of 1948 ggests great caution in prediction, though can be recorded that most forecasts indi- te a Labor victory by a reduced majority.

This uncertainty furnishes the oppor- nity of recording some lessons from the itish elections which are not related to e outcome. The most important truth be learned is that Britain has finally solved the question of the relation be- een democracy and socialism. In past cades there have always been democratic cialists who were not certain whether the ins of democratic socialism would finally ve to be defended against undemocratic scist) efforts to destroy them; or whether might be necessary for even a democratic cialism to renounce its loyalty to democ- cy in order to preserve its gains against e possibility of their undoing by the position. In British socialist thought arold Laski symbolized this uncertainty, metimes arguing for the possibility of a evolution by consent" and at other times king a more orthodox Marxist line.

It is now quite apparent that the demo- atic tradition can be so strong that ither side dares or desires to challenge either for the sake of undoing or of eserving socialist gains. The British ction is a clear answer to the apprehen- ns of all reactionaries who claim that y step toward socialism must lead to a al step toward totalitarianism. The uation in Britain is that no party which reatened to wreck every part of the cialist program could possibly come to wer democratically. There is therefore temptation for the industrial classes to allenge the democratic process; and no ssibility of doing so with the prospect of ccess.

On the other hand, if the Labor party should be tempted to overcome the disillusionment of its followers in not having achieved the "promised land" by undertaking further socialization for purely political reasons, it will most certainly be defeated in some election. One may speak of such disillusionment as an inevitability, for the simple reason that no social system can satisfy all the promises which are made for it, particularly not in a situation of post-war impoverishment. One may also regard the temptation of a socialist party to meet this disillusionment by more rigorous dogmatism as inevitable. A socialist party will naturally believe that more promises might be fulfilled if the socialist program were carried to its final conclusion. But that is not necessarily the right answer to the problem. It is, in fact, probably the wrong answer. This is why it is important to guard the values of democracy more zealously than the achievements of socialism. Democracy makes it possible to challenge the pretensions of every political program and to subject them to the test of actual experience. Every healthy modern nation (and Britain is probably the nation with the greatest degree of internal health, however precarious its external situation) must and will solve the perennial problem of the relation of freedom to justice, of planning versus initiative, by moving circumspectly from case to case.

The second lesson to be learned from Britain is that democracy has the possibility of surviving in the war of rival creeds if the creeds are not too diametrically opposed to each other, and if contending parties stand upon some common ground. It is therefore interesting that Churchill has not carried on his campaign as our Republicans would have waged it. He made no attack on the "welfare state." On the contrary, he told a Welsh audience that he was proud of having been David Lloyd George's lieutenant in initiating the first program in the direction of a welfare state. There is, in short, more common ground between British socialists and British Tories than between American New

Dealers and Republicans. The common ground is achieved by the common conviction that a government must act for the sake of "the general welfare," and by the absence of the illusion that a completely unfettered economic process will automatically make for justice. That is why democracy is actually safer in Britain than it is with us. Yet it is safer with us than most British socialists imagine. One reason why this is true is that the Republicanism which challenges our pragmatic ventures in the direction of a welfare state is so out of touch with realities that it has little prospect of regaining the confidence of the American people for a long time to come. The other reason is that our very pragmatic type of "welfare state" politics may be confused by fewer illusions than the democratic socialism of Britain.

BLOOD THAT MAKETH AN ATONEMENT

There's always a horror beyond this one,
Beyond the dreadful one you've just now heard.
Go far, go where despair is moon and sun;
Go where heaven's curse is the only word.
You'll see or hear or feel no pain or loss
Worse than perfect love hanging from a cross.

There's always a gladness beyond this one,
Beyond the joyful one you've just now heard.
Go far, go where delight is moon and sun;
Go where earth's blessing is the only word.
You'll see and hear and feel earth's joy is loss
Beside perfect love hanging from a cross.

R. A. LANDOR

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PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD TODAY

By CLIFFORD L. STANLEY

The above form of words, suggested by one of the topics of the Fall Conference of the Frontier Fellowship, has been truly providential for the present writer. These words have served as the occasion for a review of all of his work and life. Perhaps if times did not change such a review would be unnecessary and we might perform the daily task habitually and half-instinctively. But times do change, and a general reckoning becomes necessary. Until it is made, there is uncertainty and depression, the practice of things no longer believed, and the maintenance of attitudes that have become irrelevant and, therefore, dangerous.

The general review mentioned above is made in connection with several focal centers of interest. First, it is necessary to have another go at the perennial invitation to perfectionism.

Anyone who participates in good works and who is active in the service of "causes" encounters an endless parade of perfectionism. Perfectionism means, first, that a given course of action comes immediately from the source of truth, like Moses' tables of the Law. Thus we hear about "Christ's way of race relations" and "the Christian solution of the international situation." These perfect counsels emanate variously from Catholic natural law, Oxford Group "direct guidance," and Quaker "concerns," to the "dialectical materialism" of the Communist. These infallible deliverances agree in only one thing: they are all directly, indeed, verbally inspired. Otherwise they differ. Which raises the problem, is God divided, or if that be disallowed, how choose between infallibilities?

Perfectionism also points to the practical possibilities of this world. That is, these inspired blueprints may be faithfully carried out. Thus we can have a world government and literally expunge war from the world. No more will men honestly disagree and dishonestly expedite their honest agreements. We can literally remove the corruptions of ideology from the truth and no longer adulterate the pure milk of the word.

Though invited to perfectionism, the decision of yesterday remains; perfectionism is an idol, a delusion. There are no "Christian solutions" to anything. There are no possibilities of perfection now nor in any remotest future, unless history changes its fundamental character. Thus, to return to the question of race relations in America, there is no "Christian solution" to this problem. There looms before us a great historic continental divide, amalgamation or separate groupings as at present. America has not made the great decision on this point, and it will probably be a considerable time until it does. When the decision is made it will be made for a complex of reasons, few of them directly "Christian." Once the decision is made the grand strategy will determine the tactics, or what is "good" or "bad" on the level of daily practice. And in order to realize the decision a great deal of power will have to be brought to bear, and that will require a "united front" of the crudest sort, in which motives will range from exalted, through indifferent, to markedly bad. How can anyone possibly call any possibility here a "Christian solution?" Furthermore, any conceivable solution will bring a host of new difficulties in its wake.

It is instructive to see what happens when a figure of tragic majesty like Lincoln is brought face to face with perfectionism. In 1862 a deputation of churchmen from Chicago requested him to free the slaves. He said to them, and these are his actual words,

The subject presented in the memorial is one upon which I have thought much for weeks past, and I may even say for months. I am approached with the most opposite opinions and advice, and that by religious men who are equally certain that they represent the divine will. I am sure that either the one or the other class is mistaken in that belief, and perhaps, in some respects, both. I hope it will not be irreverent for me to say, that if it is probable that God would reveal his will to others on a point so connected with my duty, it might be supposed that he would reveal it directly to me; for unless I am more deceived in myself than I often am, it is my earnest desire to know the will of Providence in this matter. And if I can learn what it is, I will do it. These are not, however, the days of miracles, and I suppose it will be granted that I am not to expect a direct revelation. I must study the plain physical facts of the case, ascertain what is possible and learn what appears to be wise and right.[1]

Though we have determined ourselves with respect to perfectionism, there is a sense in which the real difficulty begins after we have so decided. For one thing, we see the perfectionist armored thickly with confidence, whereas we are hesitant, open to every blow of doubt. He has a sense of direction which mocks our fumbling empiricism. He is clear when complications torture and reservations overload us. In addition to our self-accusations, the perfectionist loads us with reproaches. We are "fringers" who can't make up our minds, one foot out and one foot in. Or we are "Social Democrats," dangerous characters. We are human, too, and such charges nettle us. We are disturbed, also, because they probe the secret troubles of relativists like us. It is a fact that any choice we make is arbitrary, even in our own eyes. This exposes us to the constant temptation to cynicism and expediency. Since all possibilities are limited, we are open to a never-ending propensity to indecision.

Without ceasing to be itself, the message that "the Kingdom of God has drawn nigh" is relevant to this problem posed by perfectionism. To begin with, just because it is the Kingdom *of God,* because it has "drawn nigh" but is still a thing apart, all possibilities of action in this world are declared to be relative. As Luther said, "God is in heaven, thou art upon earth." The "infinite qualitative difference between time and eternity" of which Kierkegaard spoke is specially manifest here. "My ways are not your ways, nor my thoughts your thoughts. As the heaven is high above the earth, so are my ways above your ways, and my thoughts your thoughts, saith the Lord." In this world there is the unbroken continuum of human events, each one marked by the quality of the whole. Over against it the fatherly rule of God, infinite in quality, of unconditioned holiness.

Though the Kingdom is apart in quality, it is not, so to speak, apart topographically. It is "nigh," "among you." It is relevant to the concrete life of man. Any analysis which renders this impossible proves too much. The Kingdom of God is not in the first instance a proclamation about a future when time shall have ceased, nor is it for another star. "And when ye pray, say . . . Thy kingdom come on this earth."

The Kingdom, which is for this earth but which is infinite in character, takes the relative things which compose the whole of our life and makes them its own. We are *grasped* by the Kingdom of God. We do what we can in best conscience; it is relative even from our standpoint, but this all-too-human activity is seized, from beyond us, and God's will is done.

The things that are thus employed by God's Reign are in a descriptive sense finite, arbitrary, sinful. But because they are *chosen* they are invested with the quality of finality and holiness. "He hath taken the weak things of earth to confound

[1] *Speeches and Letters of Lincoln,* Everyman's Library, Dutton.

he strong, yea, even the things that are ot, to confound the things that are."

Let us return for a moment to the race roblem. I do not know of any perfect olutions, but there are some things I know. ome years ago a young woman was driv- ng in the South. Her name was Juliette erricotte. She was a colored woman, a orker for the National Board of the WCA. She was involved in an automo- ile accident and cruelly hurt. She was aken to the nearest town but, being col- red, she was not admitted to the hospital. o she was taken to town after town. And nen she died, because there was no room n the hospital. It was wrong that Juliette erricotte had to die. The whole thrust f the Kingdom of God is against it. That tuation will have to be changed. What- ver has to be done to make that change ossible will have to be done.

The relativist, "instructed in the King- om of God," has a strength of his own; e is not forever irresolute; he can decide. tephen Vincent Benet, in his epic "John rown's Body" (p. 214), puts some words n the mouth of Lincoln that seem to elong here.

O will of God,

am a patient man and I can wait
ike an old gunflint buried in the ground
While the slow years pile up like moldering leaves
bove me, underneath the rake of Time,
nd turn, in time to the dark unfruitful mold
hat smells of Sangamon apples, till at last
here is no sleep left there, and the steel event
escends to strike the live coal out of me
nd light the powder that was always there.

his is my only virtue as I see it,
bility to wait and hold my own
nd keep my resolves once they are made.

There is a second problem, which for e writer, and many members of the Fron- er Fellowship, centers around the word *cialism.*

Just because some of us are relativists, rejecting perfectionism, this does not mean that we are mere empiricists, as unpredictable as a chip on the current or a gossamer in the wind. The alternative here is not perfectionism but chaos. It is true that our clues and imperatives to action come from the process of life itself, what Lincoln called "the plain physical facts." But that very process has its "signs of the times," its trends and climates. The process of life itself encourages and lends itself to embracing generalizations and large-scale programs of action.

For this writer, for the Frontier Fellowship, and for the Religious Socialists, the European predecessor and analogue of our group, this embracing generalization was socialism. Socialism here refers to the Marxian and not the Fabian variety. This is not the place to give all of the reasons for this choice, but a few of them can be indicated. Socialism understood in a very adequate way the decisive role of the economic structure in connection with cultural and political forms. For our period this means capitalism, which is the real, if unrecognized, history maker. Marxism, further, is very generous and discerning in recognizing the creativity of capitalism, which developed the means of production. Far from simply sweeping capitalism away, Marxism presupposes its productivity. But Marxism understands also the self-defeating character of capitalism, where a potentially infinite productivity, dedicated primarily to profit, overtakes and saturates every market it enters. During the "expansive phase," while the machine is being built and many markets remain, this danger is latent. But at some point it passes over into actuality and begins to accelerate in recurrent "crises," which sweep an increasing circle of beneficiaries into ever deeper depressions. Each year that capitalism over-stays its time the deepening disorder requires a grimmer violence until all community disappears.

Meanwhile, the worker grows ever more dependent on the capitalistic machine. He loses the old skills of the artisan and

becomes a machine tender, and even this is restricted as the complexity of the process is increased. The worker is dependent economically on the machine and is no longer his own employer. This dependence becomes more abject as ownership or—better still—control becomes so centralized and hidden as to defy discovery and a demand for accountability. Both as employee and as market the worker is subject to the self-destructiveness of capitalism. At some point, for very life's sake, the worker, being the most abject sufferer, must bring the process to a halt. In so doing, he serves all the people and performs the most strategic service of the age.

For us socialism out-thought its rivals—evolutionary capitalism, single tax, social credit, the corporate state—and swept the field. Because it was inherently the best alternative it was, in our faith, "grasped" by the Kingdom of God and for us it became the will of God. It was relative, from below, not above, but its very relativity caused it to be chosen by the Kingdom which has to "draw nigh" to *something* or it does not "draw nigh" at all.

Nor did the Kingdom of God simply choose it, but it subjected socialism to a criticism such as it usually found only among its enemies. The religious pretensions of socialism were struck down. Let God be God! The utopianism of socialism was exposed and exorcised, for instance, its idea of the withering away of the state or the disappearance of war between nations. Socialism, in its emphasis on the economic aspect of life, destroyed the real autonomy of political and cultural life, reduced man to "economic man." This also was criticized. The tendency of socialism to fasten ideology upon capitalism, and not to trace it to the sinfulness of man, was disallowed.

For such reasons and with such reservations, we were Socialists. Our chosen theory enabled us to interpret history, yes, to prophesy, and it gave us a sense of direction and movement.

Now we have begun to wonder, not because we thought socialism was made in heaven and handed down by angels but can no longer believe just that, for we never did believe it. What we have begun to question is the adequacy of socialism *as a human theory,* and therefore, whether it is chosen and grasped by the Kingdom of God which ever draws "nigh" and cannot be lured down any by-path of life. In that case the Kingdom would not be "nigh" but, rather, distant.

Several considerations inspire our doubt. The first is the fearsome development in Russia, surely as destructive of human values as the direct possibility of capitalism. Theory and tyranny between them destroy every autonomy. We may say that this is a Leninist-Stalinist distortion of socialism, and not the philosophy itself. To this, two answers may be made. Insofar as the Russian development is socialism, to that extent socialism lends itself to such a destruction of autonomy. This is brought out by Eduard Heimann in his studies in *Freedom and Order.* Socialism is over-preoccupied with order, too complacent about freedom. It overemphasizes the economic aspect at the expense of the political and cultural. This was noted by the Christian Socialist, as indicated above but it is one thing to criticize a theory; it is another to behold a desolation which has engulfed a considerable portion of mankind. This brings us to the second answer. Leninist-Stalinist socialism has, to a great extent, possessed the socialist field, thus making the other theoretical socialist variations historically irrelevant. That is worth thinking about.

A second cause for doubt is presented by the course of development in certain countries, notably Britain and the United States. The first notable aspect of this development is the growing significance of organized labor—powerless in Russia, let us recall. The "industrial" union has found and grappled with industrial power in its lair, and federated unions can try conclusions with interlocking directorates. In Britain labor is politically awake, and

in America, as with the Reuthers, it is beginning to be. The very economic struggle tends to make government an arbiter and to emphasize afresh the political aspect of life. Not only is the state an increasingly important arbiter (enforcing pensions, for example), but as the "welfare state" it is bringing many of the benefits hitherto expected only of socialism. It is well to remember in this connection that the Beveridge "cradle to grave" plan was produced by a Tory government in England. The state has also begun economic planning, strongly in England, gently but nevertheless truly in the United States. Even without the Brannan plan, we practically have planning in agriculture, and the watered-down version of the "full employment act of 1944" which was passed a year later gives us a beginning of it in industry. So far we have no government ownership of industry in the United States and no immediate prospect that we will have any. In Britain there is some, but even so there is the likelihood that much private industry will survive there. In all this there are emerging the lines of a plan in which practice has outrun theory. In this plan the economic problem is being attacked and the attack, far from destroying political liberty, is in every instance based on it. The question we must ask ourselves is, does all this add up to a real solution of the problem of an industrial age?

There is a third development which has given us food for thought, namely, the political struggle between America and Russia. The fierceness of the conflict has, shall we say, somewhat accelerated the process of our thought. The Russian development, as suggested above, has made us ask whether we could in good conscience call ourselves socialists any more. It might be mere Quixotism, with our interpretation rendered absurd by the undeniable tides of history. In that case our washing our hands of Russia would not be the abandonment of brothers, nor a tragic choice of political patriotism above economic patriotism. The American development, as suggested above, has made us ask whether the things we used to hope for under the name of Socialism may now be given under some new name. In that case doctrinnaire socialism might cause us to lose reality where it is important for us to remain politically relevant.

Things like these have caused us to wonder. If we keep socialism will it not be conditioned beyond recognition? Or has it outlived its usefulness? Sometimes it seems to be one, sometimes the other.

The Kingdom of God is ever "nigh." If socialism is irrelevant and dangerous, the Kingdom is not "nigh" to it; the Kingdom no longer "grasps" it. In that case we must be prepared to lose the sense of confidence and direction which socialism conferred upon us. But the Kingdom is always "nigh" life at its point of greatest openness and promise. If that point is not socialism it will be some other place. If we do not know, we must wait until we do know—we who yesterday lived by an embracing generalization and travelled by seven league boots. It is not easy to wait. Sometimes it is required. . . .

his state
Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
and post O're Land and Ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and waite.[2]

There is a third focal center of interest in this review of a ministry and of life's goals, and that concerns a trend toward the loss of hope.

In the first chapter of Reinhold Niebuhr's recent book, *Faith and History,* there is a remarkable collection of material. The main thesis of the chapter is to the effect that all modern men shared a strong optimism about the possibilities of history, though they differed almost altogether about everything else. Then the chapter goes on to prove it! There is the rationalist Leibniz with his "best possible world" satirized by Voltaire in *Candide;* there is the romanticist Herder with his *Education of*

[2] Milton: Sonnet On His Blindness.

the Human Race; there is the critical idealist Kant with his "universal peace" and the dialectical idealist Hegel with his optimistic *Philosophy of History.* J. S. Mill, the utilitarian, and Kant, the ethical rationalist, differ in all else but their confidence in the improvement of the human lot. French Enlightenment positivism as in Comte, with his progress from theology, through metaphysics, to science, is at one in hope with the otherwise opposed German idealism. The determinism of Huxley is as hopeful as the voluntarism of John Dewey. The evolutionist looks for a fairly steady progress, the Marxist looks for progress just as certainly, but a progress ushered in by catastrophe. The one really astounding thing about all this Babel of disagreement is the unargued agreement that the possibilities of human history are bright. No one was struck by this single coincidence, yet to us it is no less than amazing. Tillich makes the point that the deepest things about a period elude detection and become manifest only to the eyes of later periods.

The last few years, however, have presented what may be the beginning of a change of climate. For instance, the average worker will not again know the easy confidence he had before 1929. The awful eventualities of the early 1930's cause him to hold on to his job with desperation and to think that the future might bring almost anything. The recent war was almost meaningless when we compare it with the ardent dedications of the World War of 1914–18. There was not even the negative meaning of repressing tyranny. America entered the war only because Japan attacked and Germany declared war on her. Even during the war one often suspected more concern about our "ally" Russia than our "enemy" Nazi Germany. Scarcely was the apathetic war concluded when the "cold war" began. If no one wanted the war, the "cold war" was utterly incomprehensible and exasperating. The atom bomb has alarmed even the least imaginative, and everyone understands that something has come to an end. The pretensions of science to be above the moral realm and to be a merely benevolent force have been shattered. Is it too much to claim that the communist leaders have lost something of their first fine enthusiasm, that what we Christians call "sin" and the "world" have begun to catch up with them? It seems at times as if the orthodox words, the pious Marxist phrases, are used to keep the faithful in line and to exploit the fears of capitalist lands. There is a somewhat hollow sound, too, about the current hymns to free enterprise. They have lost the animal verve, the vulgar, self-assured robustness of yesterday. Most of the energy of the champion of free enterprise nowadays is funnelled into a purely negative reaction to all rivals. Behind the screams one detects a guilty conscience, a loss of confidence.

If we amass such things as these, we wonder whether we are drifting into a widespread failure of nerve, a mass historical blue funk. This is very serious. What if the unparalleled dynamism and historical hope of modern man were to be swallowed up in an unprecedented loss of trust in the possibilities of the human enterprise. This can hardly be contemplated.

We must ask ourselves, how can the message of the Kingdom of God comfort us and reanimate us with hope, so that movement and direction may be restored to our lives?

The message of the Kingdom of God reminds us that in former decades we have put our trust in man. It was always man who would bring in the better day by will or thought; it was man who would go in and sit down in the perfect fulfillment. Even when, as in the case of evolution, the very universe was supposed to bring the heart's desire, it was a universe comprehended by reason and not responded to in faith; it was a universe in man's image. We Christians know that there was faith in all this, a very naïve faith. But the believer thought it was knowledge, not faith, so it was not accounted to him for righteousness. From the standpoint of the Kingdom of God, man is not a being on

whom to depend; he is the beneficiary of alvation. His works are not good; they are grasped" by the Kingdom. "With men it s impossible but not with God, for with God all things are possible."

The first resource of the Kingdom is to educe man to size; the second is to remind ls that God brings the Kingdom. We sed to argue about this. "It destroys nitiative," we said, " it encourages quiet-sm." Now we are ready perhaps to know what it meant all along. It was a glorious ruth to take the 'if's' out of human hopes nd to establish them beyond failure or nischance. But we are still free, and if the ule of God was resisted by our pride, the ord of comfort may be refused by our espair.

The third resource is to tell us plainly hat we have begun to suspect, that we ave misunderstood the possibilities of his-ory. To be sure, the Hebrew-Christian radition maintains a dynamic view of his-ory. There is progress, but it is progres-ve Revelation. The meaning of history the history of Salvation. It is the nighty acts" of God. We live "between he ages" of Christ's first coming and His econd coming to judge the world, when will be manifest that "good" is what He pproves and "evil" what He disapproves; nd when He comes to complete the partial lfillment which Christians possess. All his was secularized, and history was ought to be immediately productive, intrinsically creative. Time of itself brought forth in ever more perfect measure. This is our danger, now that we have begun to falter. Having hoped too much, there is now the possibility that we may expect too little. Illusion is ever the parent of despair. The message of the Kingdom offers us a chance to give up the self-centered sorrow, which disintegrates, for the "Godly sorrow" of repentance.

What we are learning in this troubled hour is the general dimension and character of history. History has not only realization and promise but also confusion, contradiction, frustration, limitation. We are pilgrims and strangers here, as were our fathers before us. In such a situation it is "good news" to hear that our fulfillment is beyond history. This is no cheap alternative to human history, no evasion or belittling of the world. Rather it is history itself which points beyond itself. For while history is our heart's child, it is our own heart that sees beyond its handiwork. In the light of the Kingdom of God, the good of this life is good indeed, not mixed and transitory as we behold it; its destiny "at the end of the world" is to be separated from the things that now affront us and to abide in the heavenly barns. Not "in this life only have we hope in Christ," and, therefore, it is open to us to be "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as *our* labor is not in vain in the Lord."

SOME ASPECTS OF THE LABOR SITUATION

By WILL HERBERG

Organized labor in America is today at the very peak of its power in organization and numbers. Over 15,500,000 workers are in trade unions, AFL, CIO or independent—a fivefold increase over 1933, when the membership of American labor union was not much more than 3,000,000. Growth has continued steadily, though at different rates, for a decade and a half. For the first time in our history, labor organization prevails in the strategic mass-production areas of our economy. Collective bargaining has become the rule rather than the exception in American industry. Labor unions are branching out into a wide variety of activities, reaching into many and diverse fields. They are a power in politics. They have a significant influence upon important phases of national life. Organized labor is, in fact, one of the central institutions of American society.

And yet the position of organized labor in this country remains fundamentally insecure. For all its power and influence, it has not yet achieved in the public mind unquestioned acceptance as an integral part of the "American way of life," alongside of such institutions as school, church, or chamber of commerce. Nor has management, by and large, reconciled itself to labor organization and genuine collective bargaining as the permanent basis of industrial relations, as employers in Britain, the Scandinavian countries, and other parts of western Europe have done. Basically, labor still has to fight for recognition and survival. But perhaps the greatest source of its insecurity is that it is confused and uncertain about itself, about its policies, its functions, and its future in American society. Despite the fact that it has become a national and even a world power, with all the responsibities that this entails, the American labor movement has no philosophy to go by. It works haphazardly from day to day without any clear conception of long-range aims and purposes. Its very success in recent years has fortified it in its unconcern for the larger view; hand-to-mouth empiricism seems to be paying dividends. But this is an illusion. The labor movement has been doing rather well, it is true, but problems have a way of accumulating and demanding settlement at the most difficult moments. It is never wise for a movement to let itself be driven by events without some understanding of the direction in which it is going or of the problems and responsibilities which it incurs. Yet that is what the American labor movement is doing today. It was not always so. Samuel Gompers and his colleagues in the leadership of the American Federation of Labor had a well-defined, though not always clearly articulated, philosophy of a free labor movement in a "free-enterprise" capitalist economy, of a movement depending on its own economic power to achieve its purposes and asking nothing of the government but to be let alone. This philosophy of "voluntarism," of "conservative syndicalism," as it has been called, was adapted to its time and, in my opinion, has enduring elements that are still valid. But however that may be, it is obviously no longer operative in the American labor movement. It was silently dropped by the AFL at the onset of the New Deal nearly two decades ago and was never even recognized by the CIO. Yet nothing has replaced it. Precisely at the moment when the American labor movement is at the height of its power and responsibility, it finds itself without any basic philosophy, with-

NOTE: This article represents part of a talk given by Will Herberg to the Frontier Fellowship chapter at Union Theological Seminary on November 17, 1949.

ut any clear overall perspective, in terms f which particular policies may be as-ssed and their implications evaluated. his lack is by no means merely a theoret-al matter; it has practical consequences f great moment, and to some of these I ant to turn in the following paragraphs.

roblems of Collective Bargaining

1. *"Participation in Management."* The ast expansion of collective bargaining in ne past fifteen years and the new condi-ons under which it has been conducted nce the New Deal have raised many prob-ms pressing for an answer. One of the ost important is the scope of collective argaining. Of late, there has been a ovement in the CIO and in certain sec-ons of the AFL to go beyond the tradi-onal concerns of collective bargaining, ch as standards and conditions of labor, nd to demand a "share in management." enerally, this has meant little more than ne right to examine the company's books see whether management's claim that the anting of higher wages or other benefits ould be economically ruinous was justi-d. But in advanced quarters, the slogan a "share in the management" is being ut forward in a much more drastic sense, the sense of labor representation on the oard of directors or other top management ody. The motives behind this new de-arture, or at least some of the motives, e not hard to understand. A "share in anagement" would immensely enhance ne security of organized labor and would robably also contribute to the stability of ndustrial relations. It might even be a rst step in the reconstruction of our eco-omic order to a more responsible and co-perative basis. All this may be true, but ave the full implications of the widening f the scope of collective bargaining to nclude a "share in management" ever een considered?

Labor unions are primarily defense or-anizations of the workers; they may and o have other functions, but they are pri-arily that. In a non-totalitarian society, ne social process involves the conflict and mutual adjustment of special groups, each with its own particular concerns and interests. Out of the interaction of these groups, the total pattern emerges; it cannot be imposed from the top except through totalitarian controls. Now labor unions are the protective organizations of those who, in our economic life, are required to obey the orders of management; without such protective organizations, the regime in the factory would still be, as it once was, sheer despotism. Whatever further functions and responsibilities unions may have or in time acquire, this protective function remains basic. But what would happen to this function should union leaders begin to share in the making of management policies? Management policies would then come down to the workers with the authority and sanction of their own leaders so that to protest against them, in any but the most trivial form, would be impossible through union channels. It is, of course, necessary for union leaders to understand and appreciate the problems of management and the needs of the national economy, but that is not the same thing as having one and the same organization play both sides, participating, in one capacity, in the formation of management policies and, in the other, serving as the representative of the workers who are to obey and execute them. Such a situation would seem bound to lead either to chaos in management, with the union representatives forming an obstructive opposition, or to the emasculation of the unions as protective organizations. Certainly, there is no reason to believe that so complete a harmony of interests would suddenly supervene that the same men could serve both as union leaders and as part of management without serious detriment to one side or the other. In any case, those who talk so eagerly of "labor's participation in management" ought to give this aspect of the matter some serious consideration before they go much further. It all adds up to the questions: What are labor unions for? What is their long-range function in a democratic industrial society? Gompers could have answered these questions very readily in terms of his

philosophy or "voluntarism," but I very much doubt if the labor movement of today has any clear notion of what these questions mean.

2. *Shift to "Security" Demands.* Labor's "participation in management" is still largely talk, but in the content of collective bargaining a great change is already under way which must be obvious to every newspaper reader. The emphasis in collective bargaining is shifting from wages and hours to social insurance and pensions. Provisions dealing with the latter figure most prominently in recent industrial negotiations and they constitute the new front of labor advance. There are important immediate economic and social reasons for this shift, but fundamentally, I think, it reflects a pervasive change in American life from a dynamic to a static outlook, from the traditional emphasis on *opportunity* to a new concern with *security*. What this means for the future of the "American way of life" is something I cannot touch upon here, although it seems to me to be a problem of first-rate importance.

The point I do want to make is the same as in the previous case. American labor is initiating a new departure in its collective-bargaining pattern, but has it examined and evaluated the implications? We may all agree that old-age pensions, whether provided by government or industry, are a real necessity in modern industrial society. But, in the fight for pensions, have not too many labor leaders succumbed to the "retirement" ideology that is being so assiduously promoted by a combination of interests, headed by the insurance companies? Julius Hochman, a vice-president of the ILGWU and head of the powerful New York dressmakers union, which has an extensive system of welfare and pension benefits, has recently called attention to this problem in a fascinating paper, "The Retirement Myth." Is the labor movement ready to fall in with the new doctrine that teaches us to depreciate the work of life in the eager hope of a workless life after "retirement?" Is the labor movement ready to concede the following thesis presented by two insurance executives in the special supplement on employee pension programs put out by the *Journal of Commerce* in its issue of June 16, 1947:

> It is approved accounting procedure to determine the effective life of mechanical equipment and to provide for its replacement when its retention in use is no longer profitable. The retirement of overage machinery is compulsory in every well-managed business. It is likewise good business practise to determine the effective productive life of employees and to provide for their compulsory retirement when their retention on the payroll is no longer profitable for the employer.

Work, in any tolerably healthy society, is the matrix of meaning in life. The "retirement" ideology, which presents retirement on a pension not as a provision against disability in old age but as the fate or even the goal of all workers, does violence to the basic psychological and spiritual patterns of life. "We have worked out a rationalization that it is good for the old man to retire," says Mr. Hochman, "But this is false, and the price for it is too costly to the old men and to society. . . . All retirement plans should be conceived and administered to *discourage* retirement except where absolutely necessary." Have our labor leaders, by and large, understood this? Have they even appreciated the significance of the shift from "opportunity" demands to "security" demands in collective bargaining? It would hardly seem so, judging by some of the pronouncements I have seen. At any rate, here too a larger view is necessary if the particular problem is to be properly understood.

3. *New Structure of Industrial Relations.* One of the enduring effects of the New Deal has been to transform the character of collective bargaining. It is no longer a process between union and management; the government is there as third party at almost every stage, in almost every important transaction. Governmental intervention in the procedures of collective bar-

ining has become so customary that it is en the first thing the parties concerned d the public at large look to. Yet it rks a drastic break with the philosophy labor relations and collective bargain- in this country, as that was understood ior to 1933. The new kind of collective rgaining has become day-to-day routine, t the labor movement has not made any ious effort to understand what has hap- ned or to assess its consequences. Labor s welcomed every act of governmental in- vention favorable to it, and most have en favorable, while it has denounced se regarded as unfavorable. But on e general problem of the new role of the vernment in collective bargaining and at that implies for the structure of in- strial relations, there has been very little ought. The AFL has, on occasion, called the "restoration of genuine collective rgaining," but it has hardly acted as if meant a return to the pre-1933 situation pure "voluntarism." Granted that "vol- tarism" is obsolete, what then is to re- ce it? How is the old approach to be dified to meet the new situation? These estions, too, there has been no real at- pt to answer.

The problem is all the more acute be- use today there is actually a crisis in in- strial relations in this country. Big dustry is basically not reconciled to a werful labor movement as a permanent ture of industrial life. During the re- nt steel strike, *Business Week* (October 1949) called upon employers, "not only coal and steel but in every line," to allenge the "myth of union invincibil- ," to stop "appeasing labor bosses" and "put an end to industry-wide dictation monopolistic labor leaders." On the her hand, labor has been slow in devel- ing a far-sighted responsibility commen- rate with its power. The coal situation d even certain aspects of the steel strike e evidence enough. It is obviously true at the arbitrary disruption of the nation's nomic life at this critical period of his- y cannot be permitted, and yet labor's sic freedoms cannot be denied if democ- racy is to endure. Clearly, some new struc- ture of industrial relations, taking account of what has happened since 1933, must be worked out, a structure involving govern- ment as well as labor and management and recognizing the quasi-public status of unions. In its own interests, labor should take—should long ago have taken—the in- itiative by presenting its own program for revamping the structure of industrial rela- tions to meet the new situation. But it has not done so. It has vigorously opposed measures which it has deemed hostile to its interests, but it has proposed almost noth- ing positive. And indeed how could it do so, seeing that it has never gotten around to formulating a long-range view in terms of which a new approach to industrial re- lations could be meaningfully developed?

Inner Problems of the Labor Movement

4. *Bureaucracy and Racketeering.* The situation is not different—indeed, it is even more deplorable—when we look at the in- ternal condition of the labor movement. The underlying problem—the decline of democratic self-rule and the spread of bu- reaucratic authoritarianism—is one of old standing,[1] but it is still almost completely ignored in official labor circles. Within the familiar bureaucratic pattern, the excesses and abuses which bureaucracy makes pos- sible, such as the self-perpetuation of power, the denial of democratic rights, cor- ruption and racketeering, still flourish in many sections of organized labor. It is not so much that these abuses exist that is so frightening; after all, our entire society is shot through with similar corruptions. It is the fact that highly respectable men, themselves of irreproachable character, tol- erate and sometimes even protect these evils within the confines of the labor move- ment. To put it bluntly: the labor move- ment, *as an institution,* has no conscience; it possesses no higher law or standard to mitigate the pressures of power and self- interest.

[1] See my paper, "Bureaucracy and Democracy in the Labor Unions," *Antioch Review,* Fall 1943.

If this judgment seems too harsh, consider three current cases, each involving an important labor union. The president of Union A is an old man, in the upper 70's, and he is thinking of retiring. But before doing so, he is arranging to have his son installed in the presidency, although on no ground whatever can his son be said to rate this position. To this old gentleman, his union is simply a private possession or perhaps a kind of feudal barony, in which it seems perfectly proper to establish a dynasty. The president of Union B died recently, full of years and honors. It is now discovered that he used nearly a million dollars of the union funds to establish an outside manufacturing concern. A local union is demanding an accounting of his estate to uncover the facts; for demanding this, it is being threatened with expulsion by the international office. In Union C, the president receives a salary of $15,000 a year. On this salary, apparently he manages to maintain a stable of racing horses, a winter home in Florida, and an estate in Ohio. Recently, when his home was burglarized, jewelry worth more than $20,000 was stolen. I am not citing these cases in order to horrify the reader with examples of the misconduct of labor leaders; leaders in other walks of life have been guilty of the same or worse. But note, these things are taking place *now,* at this very moment, but is there a single indignant voice raised anywhere in labor's ranks? Has any labor leader shown himself particularly outraged at what is happening? Let the reader answer from his own experience.

5. *"Total" Unionism.* These are gross evils; they point to the truth of the charge that, in some sections of the labor movement at least, "anything goes if you can get away with it." But there is a more subtle danger that especially affects progressive labor leaders, who regard with contempt the crude corruptions incident to "business unionism." I refer to the attitude that a labor union is not really an industrial organization at all, but a *total* organization, designed to meet the needs of the worker on all fronts and to represent him in all social interests. This is related to the theory that trade unionism is, or must become, a "way of life" for the masses of the workers. On this view, *everything* falls within the scope of unionism, everything from gaining a few cents more in wages to endowing life with meaning amidst the perplexities of existence. The task, therefore, is to extend the power of the union in every direction and to push its activities into every field of social life, so as to make the coverage of unionism in the end coterminous with the worker's total needs and interests.[2]

This point of view, which is held more or less explicitly by most American progressive unionists, has a certain undeniable appeal. It shows a real feeling for the larger aspects of the labor movement. The only trouble with it is that it is incompatible with the notion of a free democratic society, which cannot tolerate such total claims on the part of any individual or group. Democracy means *pluralism* if it means anything at all, the wide distribution of power and responsibility, with *various* organizations embodying and championing the multifarious interests of men in society. The idea of one great overall organization representing the total interests of its members is essentially totalitarian. It cannot escape us how closely the formula "everything in and through the movement" parallels the notorious formula "everything in and through the state," and how easily the one turns into the other when, as in the old syndicalist dream, the "movement" becomes the state. That this notion should have become so prevalent, almost normative, in progressive labor circles is enough to show how little serious thought even the best of our labor leaders have given to the nature of the labor movement and to its place in democratic society.

But it is more than a question of lack of thought. Just as the evils of business unionism are the result of crude self-interest unmitigated by higher standards or even professional ethics, so the totalistic

[2] See my paper, "For 'Limited' as Against 'Total' Unionism," *Labor and the Nation,* April–May, 1946

etensions of progressive unionism are the ult of the *absolutization* of the labor ovement. "Labor" becomes, so to speak, end in itself, and its corporate interests e exalted into the highest law. The en-ncement of the power of the labor move-nt under all circumstances, in all areas, ms obviously self-justified. It is hardly cessary to call attenion to the insidious ys in which the personal impulses of ide and power on the part of labor lead-s are often compounded with the higher terests of the movement with which they e identified.

6. *Problem of Labor Conscience.* The k of a labor conscience—or, as it has metimes been called, of a labor public inion—is, in a sense, the basic problem American trade unionism and is closely ked with its lack of a philosophy or long-nge perspective. It is a problem that has historical, sociological, and even theo-gical aspects. The phenomenon of a ouble morality," one ethic for private life d another for the organization, is in-ved. But what I want to stress here how little religion has been operative the lives of leaders and rank-and-file rkers alike in their capacity as mem-rs of the labor movement. Among Cath-cs, and they constitute a very high portion of organized labor, there has en an almost total divorce between their igion and their labor activity. Recent orts of the Association of Catholic Trade nionists (ACTU) to make their religion evant to their responsibilities in the labor movement—I am not here judging how effective or well-advised these efforts have been—have met with bitter opposition on the part of the most prominent Catholic labor leaders, who insist that the place of religion is in the church. As for Protestants and Jews in labor's ranks, their outlook on social questions is almost entirely secular and the relevance of their religion, if they have any, to their labor concerns never so much as enters their minds. At one time socialism served in a way as a "conscience" for at least a section of the labor movement. Today, with the decline of the socialist faith, labor is left without any higher commitment capable of transcending self-interest, individual or collective.

It is our belief that labor has a special vocation in society, a vocation that enables it, while pursuing its own interests, by and large to promote the interests of society as a whole. That is why we in the Fellowship take our stand with the labor movement against the forces of economic privilege and reaction. But the vocation of labor is no guarantee against blindness, confusion, or corruption in its ranks. It is no guarantee against—indeed, it actually invites—the peril of self-absolutization. If labor is really to fulfill its vocation, it must redeem itself, and be redeemed, from its intellectual narrowness and spiritual torpor. It must develop a philosophy and a civic morality that will enable it to use the power it possesses in a responsible and creative manner.

CORRESPONDENCE

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To the Frontier Fellowship:

We members of the Japan Socialist Christian Zen Sen Dohmei are glad to be able to send news of the formation of our organization, and our fraternal greetings, to the members of the Frontier Fellowship. We are indebted to you for the example you have given us of the contribution that Christian socialists can make when they pool their strength. We have used the statement of principles of the Frontier Fellowship to great profit as we worked out our own convictions, and we follow with interest all reports of your activities.

Our group was formed in the early part of this year (1949) as a result of our conviction that as a witness to our faith in a God of righteousness we must do our utmost to save Japan from the waste, inequality, and injustice of capitalism on the one hand, and from the pretentious illusions and the unrelieved tyranny of communism on the other. To this end we are committed to social democracy as an implementation of our Christian convictions on the economic and political plane. Our purpose includes research into the possibilities of a planned economy for Japan, the endeavor to awaken the Church of our country to a prophetic social witness, and a program of education by the spoken and written word which will create the demand for a more realistic and effective socialist party.

We are well aware that the achievement of a socialized economy in Japan is dependent in no small measure upon the success of similar movements in other lands. This is especially true for us because of the impossibility of our maintaining a self-sufficient economic life. In our platform we repudiate all racial discrimination, and assert that the total resources of the earth are to be used for the common good of all its people. We are therefore especially desirous of achieving solidarity with like-minded Christians in other countries. We are eager to maintain a close relationship with the Frontier Fellowship, since the destinies of our respective countries seem to be intermingled in so many ways. In view of the critical nature of the times through which Japan is passing and of the influence which the United States exerts upon her, we wish to ask your prayerful attention to the following matters.

1. We are grateful for the forebearance and the humanity with which the occupation, under the wise direction of General MacArthur, has been carried out. Democracy has made great strides in Japan in the last four years. We are, however, in no sense a free nation. Our domestic mail is regularly censored; our foreign trade relations, including the nature and volume of our exports, are largely determined for us; and even small details of domestic policy are settled in the last analysis by the direct or indirect influence of the occupation forces. We believe that our new institutions can be nurtured only as they are allowed to function in an atmosphere where responsibility for decisions must be borne by those who make them. While mindful of the complexity of the international situation, and of the probable need of maintaining some kind of garrison in Japan for an indefinite period, we wish to bespeak the aid of our comrades in the Frontier Fellowship in hastening the day when a treaty shall be written and the technical state of war, which still continues even though four years have elapsed since Japan's surrender, shall come to an end.

2. With a population of eighty millions, and a country smaller than the state of California, of which only sixteen per cent can be cultivated, our economic problem

a very serious one. Foreign trade is our
ly hope for survival. At present this
ade must be carried on in foreign ships,
which Japan is reported to be paying
quarter of a billion dollars per year. Is
not possible for our country to be allowed
ship its exports in its own merchant
arine?

3. We are deeply interested in the
nievements of the Tennessee Valley Au-
ority in the United States. Could not the
ited States encourage the establishment
similar undertakings for the regional
velopment of Japan? Inasmuch as vast
antities of American capital are report-
ly being invested in private enterprises in
pan, could not capital be lent, under
oper safeguards, for enterprises of the
ture of the Tennessee Valley Authority,
which the profit element is subordinated
the common good?

. In this time of rapid change we are
ecially desirous that the Church in Ja-
n shall play its full part in influencing
ional policies and in creating a national
science. Among the many Christian
lers who have visited Japan since the
few have been primarily concerned
h the social responsibility of the Church,
l almost none have held the viewpoint
the Frontier Fellowship and the Zen
Dohmei. We should welcome a rep-
entative of the Frontier Fellowship, if
r organization could make such a visit
ssible. We feel that the stimulus and
p such a person could give to activities
our own and to the Church as a whole
uld be very great.

n conclusion, it is our earnest prayer
t our two organizations may be used of
d as instruments of his righteousness,
t the cause of justice and peace may
advanced in our two countries and
oughout the world.

Signed: Prof. Gan Sahakibara,
Chairman of the Committee of the Japan Socialist Zen Sen Dohmei.

II

Editor of Christianity and Society:

My admiration and agreement with the gist of Mr. Bonthius's article on Christian sex (Fall, 1949 issue) encourage me to level a criticism or two at a couple of his supporting points. I think his article illustrates, as have some of the other articles and reviews in the magazine, one of the difficulties that an advanced group of Protestant thinkers inevitably faces; namely, the confusing of official formulations of opinion by official Christian organs or nominal affiliates with the actual state of affairs within the Christian community. If we are serious followers of Paul Tillich's thought, we must take the best organs of secular opinion within our cultural community as seriously, as both allies and opponents, as we take those organs whose friendship is more openly avowed. Mr. Bonthius has posed, as one limiting pole of his discussion, the therapeutic positivism of the Kinsey Report, and as the other, the tabloid accounts of broken families and mounting divorce. One of these poles exists on his own level of life and thought, the other is mainly a rhetorical device, it seems to me, like the "snarls and snorts" which Roger Shinn heard from readers of Eliot's *Notes on Culture.*

If, on the other hand, he had used as a contrary pole to Kinsey, the enlightened and humane view of the value of sex, wholly apart from religion, that you find, for example, in Delmore Schwartz's story, "The Child Is the Meaning of This Life," the whole problem might have appeared in a slightly different light. The characteristic fault and perhaps, if the word is not too strong, arrogance of "enlightened" religion, is to suppose that its chief audience and target is unenlightened religion rather than enlightened non-religion. Our society is, in fact, made up very largely of people who have benefited greatly from the sexual freedoms and enlightenments of the last decades, though few have resorted to actual therapeutic aid. Books by medical people like Margaret Sanger have been advancing

most of Mr. Bonthius's principles for many years, and whatever the official views of the Churches, these principles have been automatically gaining sway. Because, after all, there is a certain desperate urgency about sex in a community as currently heterogenous and unformed as ours. It supplies the one infallible cement, the one infallible release from tension, and assurance of continuity. I doubt if many people on Mr. Bonthius's level of intelligence and education would argue a single one of his points about the spiritual value of sex, though they might be shy of the word 'spiritual.'

What these intelligent, sexually enlightened people *are* profoundly confused about, however, is the nature of Christianity itself. I can't agree with Mr. Stinette that Mr. Bonthius's categories of the rejective, forensic, and meliorative approaches to selfhood do much more than throw sand in our eyes at this point in history. What each of these forms of Christianity was looking for, after all, was a viable mode of accepting Jesus as the Christ. Each sought it in a way most in accord with its national, cultural and ethnical traditions.

The point for all of them was acceptance of the Divine-human self rather than of the merely human self. While it is certainly true, as Paul Tillich writes, that in order to love others we must in some respect love ourselves, according to the great commandment, he does not go on to say that a theological or even a pastoral task can be made out of self-acceptance. Isn't it true that without a certain definition of the Christ a Christian has no true self to accept? So he must be ready to wager, or surrender, everything, his life, his self, whatever is asked of him, as so many continental Christians were asked to do under the Nazis.

I realize it is not enough to cry 'crisis.' A sense of crisis must arise of its own accord from factors of history, training, capacity, etc. But I cannot help seeing the whole trend of personality-engineering in intelligent Christian circles as a wasteful development. Aren't we confusing our roles as Christian apologists and speculative thinkers when we engage in this? Aristotle had as profound an insight as any modern psychologist into the physical factors necessary to breed character and good action, but he didn't confuse this sociological analysis with normative ethics. "Go and sell all thou hast, and follow me" was his advice, as well as Jesus's. The rest, self-acceptance, integration, home, family, children, will or will not be added, according to God's good pleasure, as expressed in the natural factors of life.

Of course, my fundamental belief is that wherever the Christian *kereugma* is preached within its own animating spirit, secondary problems of social adjustment will solve themselves. What would Mr. Bonthius say to all the evidence that the Shakers, while they lasted, lived lives of extraordinary quiet harmony and productiveness. The phenomenon we call 'Victorian', of senseless repression, seems to have been mainly the result of an industrial ethic which emphasized a certain form of contingent, prudential rectitude, an ethic of the bank and counting-house. That Victorian man and woman appreciated sex sufficiently, however, is obvious in the nature of their clothes and literature. But the repression of the early Church is entirely different, the repression of enthusiasm, and even that was restricted to a relative few, as we can read in the difficulties of St. Paul. Augustine, in fact, was essentially more liberal than Paul, recommending marriage for one of his close friends. And it can be readily seen in the Prologue of Chaucer's "Wife of Bath" that the situation was well under control among the intelligentsia of the late Middle Ages. Chastity was an ideal of faith and gallantry, more a tribute to the abounding vitality of the age than a reflection on it common sense.

Sincerely,

ROBERT FLINT,
Halibut Point,
Pigeon Cove, Massachusetts.

BOOK REVIEWS

EXISTENCE AND THE EXISTENT. *By Jacques Maritain.* New York: Pantheon, 1948. 149 pp. $3.00.

For students and disciples of Thomas Aquinas, so it would seem from this book and other writings of M. Maritain, there is nothing new under the philosophical and theological sun. The reason for this is simple: Thomas virtually discovered (with some help from Aristotle) all there is to know about both being and existence, and what he did not discover or what is incompatible with his thought is of no account because it is not "authentic." All this is ironical in the highest degree. The great achievement of Thomas, according to the historical ingenuity of convinced Thomists, is the "liberation" of philosophy from the service of theology. It is clear that what is now needed is a new liberation: philosophy must be saved from Thomism. Philosophy must be saved from that "freedom" in which it is permitted to deal only with those problems that are dictated as its proper business (See p. 139 where the hierarchy, mystical wisdom, theological wisdom, philosophical wisdom, established by Thomas, is said to be immutable "because it does not depend upon us"), and from that "liberty" in which it must not arrive at any inauthentic conclusions.

This latest book contains, besides M. Maritain's attacks on the perennial culprits, Descartes, Kant and Hegel (Maritain should at least quote some passages from their works now and then instead of making only general comments), a discussion of Thomas' views on such themes as Being, Creation, Existence, and the Free Existent (God), together with a concluding chapter, one of the best in the book, on the relation between "existential" and "academic" existentialism. There is material here for endless discussion, the most important part being the existentialism of Thomas. Space does not permit the extended consideration it deserves,[1] and, in fairness to M. Maritain's noteworthy analysis, I shall not attempt to deal with it fragmentarily. Hence I shall confine my attention to such points as can be dealt with briefly.

The present volume may be described, according to the author, "as an essay on the existentialism of St. Thomas Aquinas" (1), but he is anxious to point out that this is no attempt to outfit Thomas in a fashionable costume, but only to chastise contemporary existential philosophy for presuming to discover what Thomas knew so long ago. M. Maritain puts this himself in a way typical of the Roman Catholic mind:

> A Thomist who speaks of St. Thomas's existentialism is merely reclaiming his own, recapturing from present-day fashion an article whose worth that fashion itself is unaware of; he is asserting a prior right. (1, cf. 139).

This is puzzling indeed since the existentialism to which Thomists have a prior right is the authentic variety of the two distinguished by Maritain (3ff.), and not the inauthentic current existentialism at all. Besides the obvious fact that the terms "authentic" and "inauthentic" are absolutely misleading here, since they really serve only to indicate the position held by Thomas and the one held by his opponents, the fact remains that in those many places where Thomas is explicitly referred to as

[1] The main problems are these:
(1) How does judgment "project into" existence the "objects of concept apprehended by the mind"? (17, cf. 11–12)
(2) Exactly what is the "act of existing" and how does the intellect grasp this? (63) If this is not made clear Thomas' existentialism falls to the ground.
(3) If essence, existence and subsistence are distinct, how can subsistence be the essence of the subject? (64)
(4) Can eternity have "instants"? (108, 114)

"existential" in his approach (3, 16, 42, 48, 62, 130, 142, 143), his position, at least as presented by M. Maritain, differs very little from that of some inauthentic philosophers of existence (see esp. 130). On this account it is difficult not to suspect that, despite the distinction of existentialisms and the claim that Thomas is not simply being modernized, Thomas is being given an interpretation specially designed for the purpose of showing that he has already maintained as much of inauthentic existentialism as M. Maritain is prepared to subscribe to himself. And this latter is considerable indeed (see 70, 73, 75, 78, 91, 125), for on these many occasions he writes just like an inauthentic existentialist, and to make the whole matter more complex, it is just then that he is most systematic, presenting his own views rather than exegesis of Thomas Aquinas.

It must be said unequivocally that this is a brilliant but difficult, and at times obscure, book. It is both brilliant and difficult in its presentation of Thomas, but often obscure in the presentation and criticism of the philosophy of existence. M. Maritain, in any case, should not write like a poet and then urge so strongly that philosophy should not be confused with poetry. He sees the main difficulties in the philosophy of existence, particularly with what he aptly calls "academic existentialism" (123ff.), and he is correct in seeing that, while the existentialist protest against rationalism is correct, it is doubtful whether it can be made into a positive *philosophy* (71–3). M. Maritain has an excellent analysis of subjectivity and its structure (67, 81), and a valid criticism of *Existenz* in his discussion of love (82ff.). What he does not see, and this is absolutely fundamental both for Maritain and Thomas, is that existentialism, at least in its inception, was not interested merely in a new mode of *knowing* what it called "existence" (see 70–1 where Thomas' "knowledge by mode of inclination" is supposed to be able to grasp the existential more adequately than purely theoretical knowledge), but in saving from thorough-going rationalism those aspects of human existence which are not primarily cognitive in character. Thomism is unable to understand this because of its radical intellectualism. I say radical because it is clear both in Thomas and in Maritain that the cognitive is supreme, knowledge is the end of all existence, and even religion is transformed into a reality whose goal is a perfect knowledge (74). In so far as this is the position adopted, it will be impossible to see that when a protest is made against the primacy of the cognitive standpoint in the interest of the aesthetic, the moral, and the religious, it is not necessarily an attack upon reason that is being made. It is true, and here I agree with M. Maritain, that later existentialism as a philosophy has gone to "absurd" lengths in attacking reason and philosophy. Nevertheless Kierkegaard did not reject reason (his existential dialectic proves this), but he did reject rationalism in all its forms.

What M. Maritain overlooks in his discussion of the existentialism of Thomas is that the whole of his theology (not only philosophy) is a rationalism which makes the cognitive standpoint primary (note Thomas' constant reference to theology as theoretical knowledge, even when mystically oriented, and his placing of faith in the genus of *knowledge* between the extremes of *opinion* and *science*, *S. T.*, II (II), Qu. 1, a. 2.). Maritain himself speaks of the "existential *intellectualism*" of Thomas. Mistaken as contemporary existentialism may be, it is correct in one central point: no philosophy or theology can claim to be dealing with the full range of human existence if it makes the cognitive standpoint the primary one. To say this is not necessarily to deny the importance of reason; it is to reject intellectualism.

There are two further points to be mentioned in conclusion. The first concerns M. Maritain's misunderstanding of Kierkegaard on the status of the ethical. Certainly no one who takes seriously more of Kierkegaard than the beginning of *Fear and Trembling* will assert (56), as Maritain does, that he gave up the ethical. The second concerns a dubious device employed

M. Maritain for discrediting his opponts. In several places (6 nl, 133) Marin casts reflections on the moral character "Herr Heidegger" which are scarcely rthy of the exalted plane on which he ants philosophical discussion to proceed.

There can be no question that M. Marin has written an important book and e which should be studied by all those ho are interested in the philosophy of istence, particularly in its bearing on hristian faith.

JOHN E. SMITH

OD'S GRACE AND MAN'S HOPE. *By Daniel Day Williams.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949. 215 pp.

This book belongs to the series of pubcations on the Rauschenbusch Lectureship undation and it is obviously a book in hristian ethics. If one were to give it a tle more accurately reflecting its content, e might well say "between liberalism and o-orthodoxy on the basis of the Gospel d process philosophy." With the qualitation that there is more Gospel than phisophy, I feel certain that Professor Wilms would have no objection to such a haracterization. In any case those who e looking for a way between liberalism d neo-orthodoxy will find this book very ggestive. Others will be impressed by e attempt to grasp old problems in a new d fresh way, particularly by the attempt give a framework of Christian thinkg which is directly geared to the strucres of man's life.

It is difficult to summarize the book, ce Professor Williams spends considerle time in elaborating the contributions d shortcomings of liberalism and neothodoxy. To enumerate them here would ly inflict a death sentence upon mateals which are very much alive in the book. What impressed me particularly is his careul analysis of the liberal view. He disnguishes between those who believe in tomatic progress and those who believe progress under God and service in His me. Nevertheless Professor Williams is re that liberalism is suspect upon theological grounds. But the distinction he makes does dispose of some "loose" criticism of liberalism. In respect to his analysis of neo-orthodoxy, Professor Williams makes its adherents too dependent upon Kierkegaard and therefore partially misrepresents them. Certain formulations of Niebuhr's thought, such as his unfortunate distinction between breaking with sin in principle though not in fact, are interpreted in such a legalistic fashion that Niebuhr is often criticized where he is in substantial agreement with the author.

Neo-orthodox theologians generally, Professor Williams maintains, believe in sheer forgiveness, not in the transformation of life. It would seem to me that there is a vast difference within the movement exactly on the question of the extent of transformation. Nevertheless, it is apparent that for the author the emphasis upon transformation in the Christian life, safeguarded through various qualifications, far exceeds that of neo-orthodox thought. One could safely venture that Professor Williams' book is the correction of liberal theology by some insights from neo-orthodox thought and not vice versa.

That the accent is on the side of liberal theology is borne out in the way in which process philosophy is used in Professor Williams' thinking. And I should like it to be understood that it is the *way* in which he uses it, not that he uses it, which makes this clear. His analysis of the inescapability of philosophical categories in theology is superb and correct against most neo-orthodox and liberal theologians. He is also clear that theology cannot be bound to any philosophy; but he does believe that process philosophy is the most adequate for the contemporary theologian. One can certainly agree that process philosophy as outlined in Whitehead and Hartshorne is suggestive and that it can often be used in Christian communication. But Professor Williams claims too much for it when he states that "the emphasis upon growth connects the New Testament conception of growth in grace with the metaphysical doctrine that the most concrete

reality we know is process," (p. 187). There is in fact continual emphasis on growth in community as the key to understanding Christianity and the reality of the world. In the analysis of process, attention is given to conflict as a part of the definition of life and to impersonal forces as necessary for the development of personality. Brunner and Niebuhr are criticized for decrying both as evil. What Professor Williams fails to grasp is that they do not deny his point but rather emphasize the evil of conflict and impersonalization in the actual reality of life under sin. In fact it is very interesting that Professor Williams frequently has to say that Niebuhr qualifies his statements and denies certain conclusions which the logic of his position demands. I find it difficult to recognize the Niebuhr I have read in most of the criticisms made by Professor Williams.

The connection between liberalism and process philosophy in this book is not accidental. The fact is that neo-orthodox theologians would not be able to use it so unambiguously, though Professor Williams is right in insisting they cannot avoid the philosophical problem. And exactly because neo-orthodox theologians feel an element of discontinuity with which Professor Williams does not agree, they will never be able to take any philosophical categories as adequate, and they will always have to transform them. The too easy alliance between liberalism and process philosophy gives the case away in this instance. Those of the more neo-orthodox persuasion for whom the problem of Christian communication is a problem, particularly in relation to philosophy,—and it ought to be a problem—will not be satisfied with this attempt. But the character and importance of this book should be evident from the questions which it raises.

JOHN DILLENBERGER

THE CASE OF GENERAL YAMASHITA. *By A. Frank Reel.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949. 324 pp.

General Yamashita, the "Tiger of Malaya," conqueror of Singapore, and last Japanese commander in the Philippine Islands, was the first man to be tried and hanged after the last war as a war criminal. From the day of his arraignment for the atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers in the last weeks of the Philippine campaign, he was convinced that he would be hanged, and what altogether surprised him and filled him with admiration for this country was the loyalty, ardour and untiring industry of the officer-lawyers assigned to his defense by the victorious army. In point of fact, that they could defend him with perfect freedom of movement and speech, and that this book could be written and published, to continue the argument which was defeated first before the military court and then before the Supreme Court of the United States—this is a reason for deep satisfaction and some hope. The book is from the pen of one of the defense counsel, who is rather restrained in his language and balanced in his judgment. The defense lawyers, one of them reluctantly, came to regard their client as a perfect stoic, a man completely conscientious and in complete control of his emotions, when the verdict was announced as well as when it was executed. The lawyers succeeded in impressing the court with the fact that their client could not have wished and did not cause any atrocities; the verdict merely says that he was responsible for not controlling his troops sufficiently to prevent these atrocities, and the counsel for the defense failed to convince the courts that it was precisely the incipient American victories which disrupted the communications between the commander and the scattered troops and deprived him of the mere knowledge of events, let alone the control over the behavior of his doomed army. The hanging of the defeated commander for not effectively controlling his disintegrating army, most of whom expected to be and were slain, was opposed before the Supreme Court by Justices Murphy and Rutledge against a majority of the Court led by Chief Justice Stone and Justice Frankfurter. The proceedings of the Supreme Court, reprinted in the appendix, no doubt are the climax of the book. That some desk

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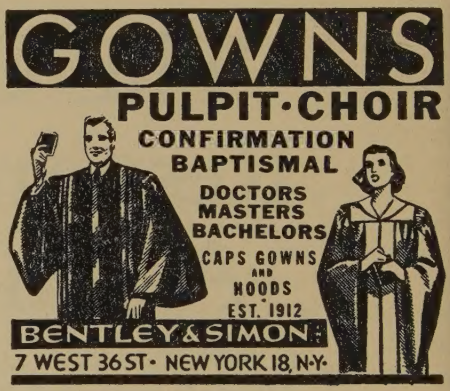
generals, who had never experienced the despair of battle, least of all of defeat, should succumb to the passions of hatred and vindictiveness, precisely when appointed to a military court of justice by their victorious commander, may be a matter of course, human nature being what it is. This is not to deny the horror of the spectacle of the victorious army arrogating to itself the impartiality and sense of justice required to sit in judgment over its fallen enemy a few weeks after his surrender. But again, nothing else could reasonably be expected of a military court; Yamashita and his counsel were right in this. What is tragic is to see the tribute which men of the moral stature of Stone and Frankfurter paid to human nature and to the passions of war and victory. If one could only read their minds and ascertain how they must have felt when listening to the trenchant and ringing phrases of the minority opinions. In these phrases justice and generosity have found an asylum and a monument; Yamashita was hanged but justice may still conquer. May the Supreme Court of the United States always count members like Murphy and Rutledge. Unfortunately, Murphy and Rutledge both are dead. It is in the light of this fact that one reads this melancholy story on the moral frailty of man, not without some hope, but not with much confidence either.

EDUARD HEIMANN



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